

went up. Under this new policy, support goes down year by year no matter what happens to prices. The combination is leaving our farmers in the ditch, literally and figuratively. Our prices are so bad, so ruinously low, that literally tens of thousands of farm families face foreclosure.

This is not just true in our part of the country. The distinguished Chair is from a nearby State. They are experiencing the effect of these very low prices, not only in terms of row crops, not only in terms of wheat, barley, and other commodities, but in terms of beef, in terms of hogs. We see hog prices as low as 8.5 cents a pound. It costs 40 cents a pound to produce a hog. If farmers only get 8.5 cents a pound when they go to sell, they are in deep trouble.

We are down to only 800 hog producers in my State. We anticipate losing as many as three-quarters of them this year; 600 of the 800 are going to go out of business. The story is not much different in terms of beef because we see cattle prices at very, very low levels.

The combination—whether it is in our part of the country, the northern plains, or as I started these remarks talking about this cotton farmer in the Deep South losing \$500,000 last year on only 2,500 acres—is a calamity. What is especially ironic is it is in the midst of a great economic boom across the country. We have probably never had better economic times in the larger economy, yet when we look at agriculture, we see the worst of times.

It is really a result of a triple whammy: bad prices, bad policy, and bad weather. To top it all off, in addition to the bad prices, these are the lowest prices in 52 years; on top of that, the bad policy—trade policy and farm policy—that has left farmers without much help in a time of this financial collapse; on top of that, we have had bad weather. In my State, 5 years of overly wet conditions have led to the biggest outbreak of a disease called scab that has also dramatically reduced production. Talk about a bad set of facts, that is it: bad prices, bad weather, and bad policy.

We have a chance to do something on the policy front. It won't solve the problem, but it will help. It is urgently needed. That is the disaster supplemental that is before the Senate.

I ask my colleagues, can't we move on that disaster supplemental? Can't we move on that legislation now? Can't we pass it? If we wait, it will be too late. If we wait, it is simply going to be too late. Farmers need to be in the field now. This is the end of April. Time waits for no man. Time does not wait when you are planting a crop.

I hope my colleagues will respond to this plea that we pass the urgent supplemental directly. I hope we do it this week and get that money out there where it can do some good and help these farmers through what is the worst crisis they have faced since the 1930s.

The time to act is now. I urge my colleagues to participate in that effort. We passed it here the end of March, and now here we are at the end of April. There is something dysfunctional when we have disaster emergency legislation before us and we passed it in this Chamber a month ago and it still is not out there; it is still not implemented.

Mr. President, I ask our colleagues to act on that disaster supplemental and to do it now. I thank the Chair.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. ASHCROFT. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it so ordered.

NATIONAL MEDAL OF TECHNOLOGY AWARD

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, it is with great honor and privilege that I congratulate Dr. Robert T. Fraley, a member of the Monsanto team of scientists, on receiving the National Medal of Technology Award for developing biotechnology that will help meet the global agricultural challenges of the Twenty-First Century.

Dr. Robert T. Fraley is the co-President of the Agricultural Sector of Monsanto, and has worked extensively on the integration of Monsanto's chemical, biotech and seed businesses. He earned his Doctorate in microbiology and biochemistry in 1978, from the University of Illinois. Among his accomplishments, Dr. Fraley was a member of the science team that developed the world's first practical system to introduce foreign genes into crop plants. He continues to work on new improved methods in agriculture through his contributions in the development of insect and herbicide resistant plants.

Agriculture is the foundation of many countries' economies, and consequently, the majority of the world's population makes its living in agriculture and food-based activities. Transforming these agricultural economies is important to achieving broad-based economic growth, not only in the United States, but worldwide. In this respect, investments in new agricultural technologies will increase farmer incomes, promote food security, advance other critical development initiatives, and contribute to environmental improvements. Agricultural biotechnology was first introduced to farms in 1995, and today in the United States, there are over 53 million acres of biotech crops.

As global food demand continues to increase, there is an immediate need to develop new agriculture tools that are productive and sustainable. With the use of new agricultural biotechnologies, genetically enhanced seeds are already decreasing pest infestation,

increasing crop yields, and reducing the need for pesticides. I believe that these new farming methods offer tremendous potential for farmers and consumers from an agronomic, economic, and environmental standpoint. As a result, our rural economies are strengthened, and our agricultural products are becoming more competitive in the global market.

I rise today to acknowledge and commend Dr. Robert Fraley and the Monsanto team of researchers for their excellent work. They have played a critical role in the pioneering of gene transfer technology and plant regeneration which began more than 15 years ago. As a result of their relentless pursuit of a vision, their development of agricultural biotechnology, as a science and as an industry, will continue to keep the United States at the forefront of food production.

Dr. Fraley and the Monsanto team of scientists are visionaries in their quest to improve the quality of life. Their perseverance, commitment, and dedication to science is an inspiration for others to reach their "highest and best." I wish them continued success as they guide us on a revolutionary path into the Twenty-First Century.

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Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, it is with great honor and privilege that I congratulate Dr. Robert B. Horsch, a member of the Monsanto team of scientists, on receiving the National Medal of Technology Award for developing biotechnology that will help meet the global agricultural challenges of the Twenty-First Century.

Dr. Robert Horsch is the co-President of Monsanto's Sustainable Development Sector and general manager of Monsanto's Agracetus Campus. He earned his Doctorate in genetics in 1979, from the University of California. Among his accomplishments, Dr. Horsch was a member of the team that developed the world's first practical system to introduce improved genes into crop plants. Thereafter, he expanded Monsanto's gene transfer capability to most important crops such as soybeans, corn, wheat, cotton, canola, tomatoes, and potatoes.

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Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, it is with great honor and privilege that I congratulate Dr. Ernest G. Jaworski, a member of the Monsanto team of scientists, on receiving the National Medal of Technology Award for developing biotechnology that will help meet the global agricultural challenges of the Twenty-First Century.

Dr. Ernest G. Jaworski was the Director of Biological Sciences before retiring from Monsanto in 1993. Since then, he has served as Scientist In Residence at the St. Louis Science Center and Interim Director of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center. He earned his Doctorate in biochemistry in 1952, from Oregon State University. Among his accomplishments, Dr. Jaworski assembled and led the team that developed the world's first practical system to introduce foreign genes into plants.

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Dr. Stephen G. Rogers is the director of biotechnology projects for Europe located at Monsanto's Cereals Technology Center in Cambridge, England, where he is presently working on the integration of modern crop breeding with improved crop methods. He earned his Doctorate in biology in 1976, from the Johns Hopkins University. Among his accomplishments, Dr. Rogers is a member of the team that developed the first method for producing new proteins in plants, leading to the discovery of virus resistance and insect protection traits for crops—a development that is revolutionizing modern farming.

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CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

Y2K ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will now proceed to the consideration of S. 96. The clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 96) to regulate commerce between and among the several States by providing for the orderly resolution of disputes arising out of computer-based problems relating to processing data that includes a 2-digit expression of that year's date.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the